



IMPORTANT MESSAGE

California Department of Health Services
Immunization Branch
Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program
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May 21, 2007

MMRV Supply

Dear VFC Provider,

Merck & Co. has notified its customers that MMR-V will shortly be unavailable and will remain unavailable for the remainder of the year. The California Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program will immediately begin transitioning VFC providers to ordering MMR and varicella instead of MMR-V.

Earlier in the year, Merck & Co., Inc., notified CDC of lower than expected yields of varicella-zoster virus (VZV), which is used in the production of three of their vaccine products: varicella (Varivax[®]), MMR-V vaccine (ProQuad[®]), and zoster vaccines (Zostavax[®]). Since then, Merck has prioritized production of varicella (Varivax[®]) and zoster vaccines (Zostavax[®]) over production of MMR-V vaccine. According to Merck's current projections, MMR-V will be unavailable by July 2007 and it is not expected to be available for the remainder of the year.

Effective immediately and until further notice, VFC will **not** accept any orders for MMR-V vaccine. The VFC vaccine order form has been modified to reflect this change. A copy of the new order form can be downloaded at www.vfcca.org. **Providers should submit orders for MMR and Varicella vaccines instead of MMR-V. Please remember to report any remaining inventory and usage of MMR-V vaccine as you place VFC vaccine orders.**

MMR-V orders submitted to VFC after this notification will be automatically processed as single antigen varicella vaccine and MMR vaccine. We expect that all MMR-V orders that have been submitted prior to receiving this notice will be filled by Merck. Please remember that orders for MMR-V have been taking 4-5 weeks for delivery.

Varicella vaccine will continue to be shipped directly from Merck, and MMR vaccine will be shipped along with your regular vaccine shipments from the VFC Program's national distributor, McKesson Specialty.

Varivax[®] and MMR-II should NEVER be mixed together for administration

For any questions, please call a VFC Customer Service Representative at 1-877-243-8832 or visit our website at www.vfcca.org. Thank you!!!

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